



## **NEWS RELEASE**

Tennessee Regulatory Authority

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**\*Consumer Advisory\***

### **TRA Launches an Investigation into Unauthorized AT&T Charges**

**Nashville, Tennessee** – The Tennessee Regulatory Authority (TRA) has launched an investigation into complaints filed by several middle Tennessee consumers who have charged AT&T with placing unauthorized service charges on their telephone billing statements. The TRA has received approximately 85 calls from middle Tennessee consumers complaining about new AT&T charges appearing on their BellSouth bill.

The practice of billing consumers for services never ordered is commonly referred to as “cramming.” Cramming is a violation of Tennessee law and is punishable by a fine of up to \$1,000 per offense.

The TRA is advising consumers who have received unauthorized charges on their telephone bill to take the following steps:

1. Discuss with all members of the home to ensure that the telephone charge was not authorized by a member of the household;
2. Contact the company that imposed the charge for an explanation and to dispute the charge, and;
3. Contact the TRA at 741-2904 (within Nashville) or 1-800-342-8359 (outside of Nashville) to file a complaint, or go to [www.state.tn.us/tra](http://www.state.tn.us/tra) to file a complaint via the Internet.

Representatives from the TRA’s Consumer Service and External Affairs Division will be meeting with officials from AT&T on March 5, 2003.

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